



COUNTY OF MERCER
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Disabilities Issues Committee

April 24, 2013
Mercer County Technical School
Sypek Campus

Present: Kimberly Schneider (MCTS), Beverly Mills (WIB), Alice Curry-Sheret (MCTS), Chip Black (WIB Candidate), Dana Hice-Depugh (MCTS), Lori Perlow (MCTS), Dave Nash (MCTS), Maribel Duarte (WIB), Catherine Stargill (LWD)

Talent Network Coordinators Present:

Anthony Campo (Transportation and Logistics), Meredith Aaronson (Advanced Manufacturing), Bob Crawford (Financial Services), Padma Arvula (Healthcare)

Opening and Introductions

The meeting was opened by Dr. Kimberly Schneider, Interim Chair for the WIB Disabilities Issues Committee. Dr. Schneider welcomed everyone and began by stating the purpose of the meeting was to collectively discuss ways to increase employment opportunities for the disabled in Mercer County.

Tony Campo began by stating he had been in past meetings where the discussion has centered on increased opportunities for veterans and those re-entering from incarceration. He reiterated that jobs in the transportation and logistics sector are more than truck driving and warehousing; he was looking forward to participating in this conversation. From an employer point of view, the business person needs to be educated. He asked about the abilities and/or restrictions of the students so he could have a clearer understanding of how to promote to an employer.

Dave Nash discussed his role as Technical Coordinator. He talked about types of co-opts (or structured learning experiences) offered to focused and accelerated students.

Alice Curry-Sheret mentioned co-opts that have worked well in the retail field. The Talent Coordinators can be the connection between a pilot project grant.

Loris Perlow added that from a recruiting standpoint information about other related occupations is important. Student counselors need to talk about foundation building and other functions contained within a cluster.

Meredith mentioned it would be helpful to understand more about constraints. Dana answered that many with learning disabilities, given the right tools, to be independent to do many things on their own.

Padma added that in the healthcare field the range is broader where entry level jobs offer more opportunity. Additional training can also take place at the hospital.

Bob Crawford said there has been a significant push by the Government for businesses to open up opportunities to the disabled. Companies must begin making plans on how to connect. He mentioned working with the “Raise Hope Foundation” to get mobility challenged individuals into Financial Services.

Catherine Stargill talked about “putting the tool kit to use,” considering programs and incentives offered by the State. How can we line up the curriculum of the Technical School with the Talent Network sectors? We need to gather information about all the jobs within the industries and where opportunities would present for the students. We need to start on a Strategic Plan.

Kim Schneider said the Technical School is always available and should set up a timeframe to start. She further suggested inviting a large number of employers as a kick-off in October.

Tony mentioned he was pleased with the discussion and felt this would be a great opportunity to develop a pilot program. Catherine agreed saying Mercer can act as the template and the Talent Network Coordinators can provide needed information electronically.

Chip Black added that he could accelerate the process; Prologistix is looking to hire 28 people with disabilities to work on the line. This project is solely based on results and after 520 hours an employee can become permanent. This could be the pilot and we can do the plan. We could also utilize the pilot when Amazon is up and running.

Next meeting: August 28, 2012 (10:00 AM) Mercer County Special Services Elementary School (2nd floor conference room).

